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Tuesday, 14 Jun 2011

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A Word From Tim Downs - May



Dear Friends,

"RESTRUCTURING"

As I write this, we are preparing for the Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference, Saturday, June 11, and shortly after this, General Synod, July 1, in Tampa. One of the significant conversations coming to General Synod is one around the restructuring of the national setting of the church to introduce a more effective coordination among ministries, and focus resources and staff more on mission than governance and structure. I believe that other settings of the church will experience the transition as one that brings greater coherence to our communications, and more effectiveness in the ways in which we coordinate our ministries together, for the building up of the United Church of Christ.



While this conversation has moved through a long and at times tedious process, another conversation is beginning to stir which might have a significant impact on the lives of the 38 conferences of the United Church of Christ. Here is a link to account of the conversation that was recently on [Keeping you Posted](#). In this article, you will see accounts of conferences exploring ways to share administration, staffing, and programming in various configurations. One proposal that may come to General Synod this year calls on the 38 conferences to become six. What impact would this have on the Southeast Conference, and what are we doing in the way of engaging this conversation in our own setting?

We too, for many years, have been looking at ways to collaborate with other settings of the United Church of Christ to strengthen our ministries and those of the whole church in all of its settings. We are a small conference, and our administration at this time is lean. There are no natural connections with our neighboring conferences. Many of these conferences are at different points in their development than the SEC. However, we have recently launched the Center for Progressive Renewal, working with the national setting of the UCC and other conferences. We felt that this organization would provide a foundation for the entire church to better equip and strengthen its new church and renewing church outreach. We are in collaboration with the Center for Progressive Renewal and Lancaster Theological Seminary as we prepare to launch Pathways, a four-year online program to train lay leaders, and licensed and ordained ministers for ministry. This program is expected to begin this fall. We have secured two grants for developing Pathways, one from the Fund for Essential Conference Ministries, and the other from the Brown Endowment, and are beginning to develop additional grants to fund the initial years of the program.



UCC News

UCC Newsroom

Headlines from the United Church of Christ

A 'Just Peace' future: Part 2

Following the recently concluded World Council of Churches' International Ecumenical Peace Convocation held in Kingston, Jamaica, United Church News asked Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite to reflect on the history, progress and potential future of the Just Peace movement.



As we look down the road there may be additional ways in which we can collaborate more fully with other settings and conferences of the UCC. We may come to share administrative functions, a search and call process, or find other ways in which to share programmatic staff. Whatever the future holds for us, my first commitment remains one of building up a vital and faithful United Church of Christ. We are living in interesting times indeed, and we in the Southeast have been graced with great resources of leadership and vision. I look forward to seeking ways in which we can share them with others, and perhaps benefit from the openness of others with their resources and staff. Join us at the Annual Meeting on Saturday June 11, in Atlanta, and you will hear more about these ideas, and have an opportunity to share some of your own!

Peace,

Tim Downs
Conference Minister

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▶ Bridge 4 Faith

▶ The Center for Progressive Renewal

▶ United Church of Christ

▶ Mission Insite

▶ Resource Center

EVENTS CALENDAR

« < June 2011 > »

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2

Steps to Planting a New Church

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